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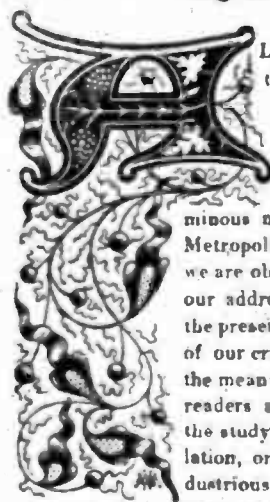
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The Builder.

NO. LXXXII.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 31, 1844.



ALTHOUGH ex-
 tending to twice our
 usual number of
 pages, being cir-
 cumscribed this
 week by the volu-
 minous matter of the New
 Metropolitan Building-Act,
 we are obliged to be brief in
 our address; deferring for
 the present the continuation
 of our critical reviews. In
 the meanwhile, such of our
 readers as take pleasure in
 the study of technical legis-
 lation, or who, from an in-
 dustrious working out of a
 necessary duty, apply them-
 selves to a nauseous task, may study the details
 of the Act; and when we give our intended
 alphabetical digest of it, drawn up by Mr. Bar-
 tholomew, they will find the collation of the vari-
 ous parts of their study greatly assisted, and
 learn, in a moment, every thing in it relating to
 any particular matter, or to any branch of its
 contents.

We shall speculate no further at present
 upon the Act; but shall in our next num-
 ber give the report of the Master Carpenters'
 Society upon it.

TIMBER—ITS TREATMENT AND USES.

BY JAMES WYLAON.

(Continued from p. 419.)

67. THE aspen or trembling poplar, when fa-
 vourably grown, is a tall, slender, and elegant
 tree, pleasing in outline, and the most interesting
 of its tribe; possessing in the highest degree
 that sensitiveness which is peculiar to the
 whole, making them quiver to the gentlest
 breath of wind; the young branches are hairy;
 the leaves are glabrous on both sides, nearly
 orbicular, and broadly toothed.

68. MAHOGANY. Of this tree there are
 three species known; that which is used in
 this country is a native of the West Indies
 and the country about the Bay of Honduras,
 in America. The West India sort is called
 Spanish Mahogany, being from the islands of
 Hispaniola, Cuba, Jamaica, &c. In the low
 lands of the latter it was formerly plentiful,
 but now these parts appear to be exhausted, and
 only the trees grown amongst high hills and places
 difficult of access remain. That from Honduras
 Bay is called indiscriminately Honduras and
 Bay-mahogany. The tree is one of very quick
 growth; large, straight, lofty, handsome in
 appearance, reaching a diameter of five feet,
 and furnishing a great quantity of very valu-
 able timber; the flowers are of a saffron-red
 colour, the fruit like a turkey's egg in size.
 It thrives in most soils; but in those of a rocky
 and exposed description, it is of a slower
 growth, and produces heavier and more com-
 pact and beautiful wood than in such as are
 low and of a rich nature.

69. The wood of the Spanish mahogany is
 the darker, harder, closer in the grain, and
 more durable, likewise the more beautiful and
 more costly of the two; both are porous, but
 uniform. The Spanish-wood is to be distinguish-
 ed from the Bay by the chalky-looking substance
 that occupies (as if it had been rubbed into
 them) its pores, which in the latter are empty,
 and have a dark or almost black appearance; that
 feature, however, disappears with exposure and
 oiling, and a similar treatment of both renders
 the distinction less observable. Mahogany
 timber, especially the Honduras, has qualities
 which would make it desirable for house-
 carpentry, but its high price precludes its being
 so employed in this country, and its ap-
 plication is almost confined to internal joinery,
 hand-rails, shop counter-tops, and the
 manufacture of house furniture; for the latter
 purpose it is very extensively used, having in a
 great degree superseded the walnut, which,
 before the introduction of mahogany into
 London in 1724, was so generally used by the
 cabinet-maker. The history given of this in-
 troduction is, that a Mr. Wollaston made from
 a piece of it a candle-box for Dr. Gibbons,
 who being much pleased with its appearance,
 afterwards caused a bureau to be made of it.
 With respect to its applicability to the purposes
 of the carpenter, it must be mentioned that it
 has been frequently used in Jamaica for floors,
 joists, rafters, shingling, &c., it has also been
 employed for building ships, for which it is
 rendered suitable from possessing, with its other
 qualifications, a property similar to that which
 has been noticed with reference to the poplar,
 of allowing shot to bury itself in it without splin-
 tering.

70. The colour of the wood is a deep gold,
 or reddish brown, of various degrees of bright-
 ness, and frequently having very fine veins and
 figures, in different shades of the same colour;
 the Honduras is apt to be blemished by dingy
 grey spots, but the best is of a fine rich tint.
 When kept dry it is exceedingly durable, and
 free from worms; but it does not stand the
 weather long, and is therefore not well suited
 for sash-frames, sashes, or outer-doors. The
 trunk furnishes wood of the largest dimensions,
 but the wood of the branches is finer in texture
 and more variegated in the veins, and is on
 these accounts preferred for purposes of a
 more delicate and ornamental nature. In
 table-tops it is common to form the surface
 from a piece of superior beauty, sawn up into
 veneers (of which twenty or more can be
 obtained from an inch in thickness), and so
 arranged in sectors of the circle that the same
 pattern of the variegation is repeated. In like
 manner, the fronts of drawers are obtained all
 alike, and are sometimes made with a joint up
 the centre of the veneer, and the two halves of
 the pattern reversed. Thus we perceive that
 the mottling and featherings, which contri-